

Office of Election Cybersecurity

Cyber threats to our elections are the new normal. In 2016, federal intelligence officials were unanimous in their conclusion that foreign actors interfered in the U.S. Presidential Election. While there is zero evidence of any hack or breach of any type in California during the 2016 elections, our state has taken critical steps to implement additional safeguards to further secure our elections. Among our new initiatives is the creation of the Office of Election Cybersecurity through an unprecedented \$3 million appropriation by the Legislature and Governor. The office will actively work with county elections officials to protect elections and combat election misinformation online. The Office of Election Cybersecurity will develop resources and trainings for county election officials to better prepare against cyber threats.

In addition, the 2018-2019 state budget includes \$134.3 million for counties to replace aging voting systems. Fully leveraged by a dollar-for-dollar match from counties, this will result in \$268.6 million toward improvements for election equipment. California received \$34 million from the Elections Assistance Commission as the final disbursement of money from the Help America Vote Act. Allocation to counties began ahead of the November 6 General Election.

For more information, visit:
Cybersecurity.sos.ca.gov.

How We Protect Our Elections

We're tackling cybersecurity head on with a series of new initiatives and maneuvers:

Cybersecurity Staff: Established the Secretary of State Office of Election Cybersecurity (OEC) and the Office of Enterprise Risk Management (ORM) in 2018.

Secure Voting Machines: California prohibits voting machines from being connected to the internet. We make it nearly impossible to systematically hack or rig an election.

Audits: We require each county to perform post-election audits after every election to help ensure accurate results.

Paper Ballots: Among our requirements are paper ballots or a voter-verifiable paper audit trail.

VoteSure: A first-of-its-kind public education initiative to promote trusted, accurate, and official sources of election information on social media.

Testing: Our voting systems undergo rigorous testing and must meet or exceed our security requirements before they can be used in California.

Online Monitoring: We report potentially false or misleading information on social media regarding elections.

Daily Cyber News: A daily media summary for local elections officials on the top cybersecurity stories.

Webinars: Quarterly webinars featuring experts and influencers on the latest cybersecurity trends.

Trainings: Best practices on preventing and responding to cyber incidents.

Contact Us

It takes all of us to maintain public trust in our elections and minimize the threat of cyber incidents. We are committed to working with county elections officials and their staff to develop resources that can prepare them for cyber threats as well as combat election misinformation.

Look out for opportunities to come together and share information at upcoming OEC webinars and trainings.

Let us know your thoughts, questions, and ideas for building a stronger cyber community. Email VoteSure@sos.ca.gov

For more information, visit:
Cybersecurity.sos.ca.gov.



It is my duty to neutralize cyber threats so voters have confidence in our elections. We won't let misinformation go unanswered. We will work to better educate and inform our electorate so they can vote with confidence.

— California Secretary of State Alex Padilla



About Us

Housed in the Secretary of State Communications Department, the Office of Election Cybersecurity (OEC) was established in August 2018. The OEC is tasked to work with local election officials to reduce the likelihood and severity of cyber incidents that could interfere with elections in our state. The OEC monitors and counteracts false or misleading information regarding the electoral process that may suppress voter participation.



Website

Cybersecurity.sos.ca.gov

Email

VoteSure@sos.ca.gov



ALEX PADILLA
California Secretary of State

